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Comité de Travail Canada-Asie

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Canada-Asia Working Group

HUMAN RIGHTS IN ASIA

SUBMISSION PREPARED FOR THE 44TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Geneva, February 1988

ISSN-0820-3296

CURRENTS Vol. 10 #1
January 1988

EAST TIMOR

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One-third of the population of East Timor, or about 200,000 people, have been killed in the war that has raged in the territory since Indonesian troops invaded in late 1975.

In addressing the conflict in East Timor, and the acute humanitarian and social difficulties faced by Timor's People, it is almost impossible to overstate the effects of the invasion and the conflict which followed it. The war has been characterized by substantial and widespread violations of human rights, including torture, imprisonment without trial, forced disappearances, and extra-judicial killings. Within East Timor, citizens are not permitted to travel at will, to correspond or communicate unhindered, or to engage freely in normal economic activity. Individuals suspected of sympathizing with those who continue to resist Indonesian rule have been punished with arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and death. [16]

The rigid isolation imposed on East Timor by Indonesia plays a central role in this process of repression. The Indonesian government's determined and consistent refusal to permit free access to East Timor by international observers has made independent assessment of the situation impossible and has allowed Indonesian authorities to control and manipulate the flow of all information on East Timor to the international community. All international contacts in East Timor, including interviews granted by the Apostolic administrator of Dili, Msgr. Belo, have been made in the presence of Indonesian military officials. [17]

Human Rights Violations

Due to the severe restrictions on the free flow of information from East Timor, there is of necessity a considerable delay between the occurrence of incidents and documentation of the event reaching agencies outside of the territory. The following cases, therefore, are not intended to represent a comprehensive picture of the actual human rights situation.

ARBITRARY ARREST and DETENTION

Twenty political prisoners were released in Dili on 5 October 87, after having served all but a few months of their sentences. Two other East Timorese prisoners were recently released from prison in Jakarta after completing their sentences. [18] While these releases of political prisoners by Indonesian authorities are indeed a welcome development, it should be noted that international human rights bodies have never been permitted to observe the trials of any of the political prisoners from East Timor. Questions remain as to the fairness of the trials, the understanding of the accused of the legal procedures followed, or their access to counsel of choice and other means with which to prepare their defense. It has been observed that since the Indonesian authorities began to bring East Timorese political prisoners to trial in 1983 only one out of some 230 accused has yet either pleaded not guilty or made an appeal against the verdict of the court. [19]

An unknown number of East Timorese political prisoners remain in detention and more have been arrested during 1987. Timorese prisoners in four jails, two in Jakarta and two in Dili, have been visited by the ICRC on two occasions in 1987. [20] According to recent refugee testimony there are more than 100 Timorese in each of two prisons (in the towns of Bobanaro and Laclubar), to which the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) does not have access. Refugees have also alleged that there are other prisons to which the ICRC does not have access, primarily at sites of Indonesian military base camps throughout East Timor. [21]

Although the detention centre on Atauro Island is officially closed, East Timorese prisoners are in many cases, in effect, still imprisoned in their home areas. They are subject to tight surveillance and cannot move more than five kilometers beyond the villages without being in danger of being killed by Indonesian forces, or face other serious consequences. Some Atauro prisoners have been re-arrested and others have been forced to serve as the advance guard in Indonesian military operations in the Ainaro area of East Timor. [22]

Two Roman Catholic catechists, Guilherme Kinamaoce and Jorge, continue to be held in L.P. Becora prison in Dili. They had given a list of Timorese political prisoners to a Portugese television correspondent in March 83. [23]

TORTURE

Numerous cases of torture by Indonesian forces in East Timor have been reported during 1987. Amnesty International has observed that "the risk of torture is much higher for detainees held outside the capital of Dili" [24], although cases are also reported to have occurred in Dili as well. The following cases are offered as examples:

- On 22 February 86 a yound man named Manu Russo from Uabubo, Viqueque, was arrested by Group 4 of the Indonesian Special Forces following a FRETILIN (*Frente Revolucionaria de Timor-Leste Independente*) guerilla raid on a clinic. He is said to have been severely tortured with lighted cigarettes and drowning. It is also alleged that he was denied food for two days.

- Aleixo Gutteres, a former UDT member, was arrested sometime in mid-1986 on suspicion of collaborating with FRETILIN. It is alleged that Indonesian intelligence officers severely beat him and tortured him with lighted cigarettes. He is now believed to be held in Comcarca prison in Dili.

- In February of 1987, Vincente de Sousa, a retired nurse in his fifties, was arrested and accused of desecrating a religious statue in Dili, an act for which many actually blamed Indonesian soldiers. He was beaten and submerged in a tank. He was released a week later, after the intervention of local Roman Catholic priests.

EXTRA-JUDICUAL EXECUTION and FORCED DISAPPEARANCE

According to refugee reports, extra-judicial executions and forced disappearances continue to occur on a regular basis in East Timor. [25] Several incidents were reported during 1987, in all cases perpetrated by members of the Indonesian military. Amnesty International has expressed its deep concern "at the failure of the Indonesian government to investigate cases of 'disappearances' and extrajudicial executions which have taken place in East Timor in the past decade." [26] A few cases may serve to illustrate the basis of this concern:

- On 23 February 86, a man named Armando from the village of Borala, was reported stabbed to death while serving as an inmate of the prison in Ossu, Viqueque. He is reported to have been stabbed to death by a military officer and a member of the civilian guard after attempting to escape.

- A tribal chief named Vatxu Tani of Maluro, Lore, Viqueque, was reported to have been killed by the First Marine Battalion on 3 March 86. He is said to have opposed the cutting down of cassava plants, a local food staple, which the marines believed were providing cover for FRETILIN. [27]

- On 16 November 86, FRETILIN guerillas are reported to have killed 36 Indonesian troops in Lliomar. Reports allege that 10 Timorese civilians were executed by Indonesian soldiers in reprisal killings. [28] Another reported incident in Lliomar alleges the killing of a woman, a worker for the local affiliate of UNICEF, and her child by Indonesian troops for refusing to lead them to the guerillas. [29]

MASSACRE

A massacre is defined as a politically motivated, military assault on a group of three or more persons resulting in multiple deaths. In 1985, both Amnesty International and Msgr. Belo drew attention to the massacre of a large number of civilians in Kraras in August of 1983. Recent information indicates that these massacres were more extensive than first believed. In the prison village of Klaterek-Mutin, where survivors of the Kraras villages are detained, only 570 persons remain alive out of an original population of 1,593. Witnesses have testified that the more than 1,000 missing persons were exterminated in a series of massacres and as a result of starvation and disease brought on by the dreadful living conditions in the camp. [30]

Although the incidence of massacres appears to have declined during the past two years, the entire population of FO-Mano is reported to have been wiped out in a massacre by Indonesian troops on 3 August 86 in reprisal for a FRETILIN ambush on an Indonesian military convoy in the area a few days earlier. [31]

STRATEGIC HAMLETTING and POPULATION CONTROL

Indonesia is implementing a two-tiered system of social control in East Timor. On the one hand, Timorese villagers are forced to live in strategic hamlets under tight military surveillance and conditions that reportedly include forced labour, confinement to a set perimeter around the camp and an aggressive birth control program that the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops describes as "especially disturbing given the great loss of life that has already taken place among a largely Catholic people, this policy takes on the character of genocide." [32]

On the other hand, East Timor has been one of the target areas for Indonesia's transmigration program. Transmigration sites are being used to transform parts of East Timor that have been more successfully pacified into large scale rice farms and cash crop estates. These "desa potensial" or model villages are settled with transmigrants from Bali and Java, and large amounts of. capital have been invested in equipment and irrigation schemes. Tunubibi, in the district of Bobarao, is one such example and often featured in the Indonesian press.

Some Timorese "translocals" are also integrated into these development villages as part of a larger strategy aimed at destroying the traditional agricultural communities of the Timorese and incorporating them into the cash crop economy. The violent dispossession of ancestral land rights in East Timor is perhaps the most extreme of military intentions towards, in Indonesia's terms, "isolated and alien tribes" throughout the archipelago. [33]

Conclusions

Gross and systematic violations of human rights, includinng political imprisonment, torture, extra-judicial execution, and forced disappearance have been a constant feature of the military occupation of East Timor since the Indonesian invasion in 1975. [34] Although various United Nations bodies have repeatedly appealed to Indonesia to withdraw its forces, [35] the occupation continues in effect and the right of the East Timorese to a free and fair act of

self- determination continues to be denied. The Indonesian presence in East Timor is not only a military occupation but appears to have become increasingly colonial in character.

Human rights violations continued during 1987 with varying degrees of intensity, to a large extent determined by the level of activity of the military campaign being waged against the indigenous resistance movement. It should be noted, however, that specific human rights violations occurred in a context of increasingly institutionalized restrictions on the freedoms of travel, communication, opinion and assembly.

[21] Testimony from Timorese Refugees, submitted to U.S. Congressional Subcommittee on East Asia and Pacific Affairs. Washington DC: October 87.

[22] Refugee Testimony, October 87.

[23] Refugee Testimony, October 87.

[24] Amnesty International, Statement before the U.N. Special Committee on Decolonization, *ASA 21/22/87*, August 87.

[25] Refugee Testimony, October 87.

[26] AI, *ASA 21/22/87*.

[27] AI, *ASA 21/22/87*.

[28] CIIR, *Timor Link*, vol. 10. London: July 87.

[29] Refugee Testimony, October 87.

[30] *Tapol Bulletin*, vol. 84. London: December 87.

[31] *The Guardian*, 21 November 86.

[32] U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Statement of Concern on East Timor*, 31 March 87.

[33] M. Colchester, "Unity and Diversity: Indonesian Policy Towards Tribal Peoples", *The Ecologist*, vol. 16, no. 2/3 (1986).

[34] Amnesty International, *East Timor Violations of Human Rights, 1975-1984*. London: AI Publications, 1985.

[35] General Assembly 3485 XXX (1975) has been reiterated seven times, most recently in GA 37/30 (1982).